

# THE CIRCULAR.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.]

DEVOTED TO THE SOVEREIGNTY OF JESUS CHRIST.

[EDITED BY J. H. NOYES.]

VOL. I.

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## TERMS AND MEANS.

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## The Higher Communism.

We believe that the spirit of the gospel is destined to gather the inhabitants of the whole world, as to their affections, into one family, and of course, to introduce ultimately, a substantial, if not formal community of goods and interests. But we do not believe that any of the schemes of seceding communism, which at present abound, are the representatives and exponents of that spirit.

It is natural for those who find themselves oppressed physically and spiritually by the present constitution of society, to seek relief in some new form of association. As the mass of mankind cannot easily be moved to change, the only alternative is, to secede and form small insulated associations. The operation of these influences may be traced in the history of the world for many ages past; especially since the introduction of Christianity. The Essenes, the monastic orders, and the Shakers, are familiar examples, varying in the details of their peculiar institutions, but alike in the principle of secession. And to the same class we assign Socialism, Fourierism, and other modern forms of Communism: for however much they may have improved upon the social and financial inventions of their predecessors, they pursue the same object by the same means; viz., amelioration of condition by retreat from prevailing social organizations.

The error which we conceive, lies at the foundation of all these schemes, is a false view of the causes and nature of the evils which afflict society as it exists. The disease to be cured, is supposed to be objective, when in fact, it is subjective. Relief is sought in a change of circumstances, while it can be found only in a change of heart. Collins and his coadjutors in the movement for 'Universal Inquiry and Reform,' have only carried out and avowed in a revolting form, the fallacious notion which infects more or less, every form of Communism, viz., that man is to be regenerated by external changes. This is the vital principle of all the popular reforms of the present day: it has been the life blood of false Christianity and Judaism: indeed, it is the most universal and dearest delusion of human nature.

There are two ways of encountering objective evil: one by attempting to diminish or remove the evil; the other, by seeking strength to meet it. Communism, and all kindred projects of reform, adopt the former method; Christianity adopts the latter. We are placed in a world of confusion and oppression. Communism says, 'Retire from it, and make a little quiet world of your own.' Christianity says, 'Stand where you are, and lay hold on the strength of him who has overcome.' Difficulty is not absolute, but relative to strength.—That which is difficult to a child, is easy to a man. So the burdens of life which to-day seem almost too heavy for endurance, to-morrow may become light as air; not by any change in themselves, but by the increase of the believer's strength.

Primitive Christianity was rugged enough to stand and overcome in the worst circumstances

that the world could present. Its foundation, the faith of Christ, was death-proof. Its disciples did not, like the Communists, retreat from the world into separate associations. For a little season after the day of Pentecost, they had all things common, and lived in a sort of separate community at Jerusalem; but they were soon scattered abroad, and in process of time the order was sent through all the churches—'Let every man abide in the calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a slave? [and what case could be worse?] care not for it; [the faith of the gospel is sufficient to make you free.] 'Let not the wife depart from her husband, [though he be an unbeliever,] nor the husband from the wife,' &c. 1 Cor. 6: 10-22. This is the kind of Christianity which we hope to see restored; a Christianity which overcomes by the strength of its faith,—not by evasion of trial,—which can live in the midst of the confusion and oppression and temptation of the world, unsullied and joyful.

This is the kind of Christianity which is needed to save the world. Redemption came at the beginning by a process the very reverse of monkery. Christ came out of the retirement of heaven, and connected himself with the world in all its pollution and misery. When he had finished his own work, he sent his representatives forth, praying for them, 'not that they might be taken out of the world, but that they might be kept from the evil that is in the world.'

For reasons which we have thus hinted at, we feel bound to counsel our friends to beware of mere Communism. Let every one stand in his lot, availing himself of any opportunities of improving his outward circumstances which the providence of God may offer him, but without anxiously seeking, or greatly valuing such improvements; let him seek first, and with a single eye, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which are accessible in any circumstances; in tribulation and oppression, in poverty and persecution, under the weight of labor and care, let him suppress that longing for outward relief which is so natural, and fall back upon the everlasting resources of God within his own heart. Let believers, as they are thrown together by Providence, in every place, resolve themselves, as far as their circumstances without forcing will allow, into one family; helping one another in temporal as well as spiritual things, but not seeking to establish formal or separate communities. Thus we shall be the 'salt of the earth,' (which must not only retain its savor, but be sprinkled,) and may hope not only to overcome, but to save the world.

## REMARKS.

In reprinting the above from the old *Perfectionist*, we need only say that we still endorse the doctrines set forth in it. We believe that Christianity is the key to true socialism, as well as every other reform; and we have never for a moment lost sight of the key, in contemplating the particular benefits which it opens to us. In our operations as Associationists we have never forgotten our superior character as Christians, but have been confirmed in it, and are more persuaded than ever that religious faith, introducing true spiritual relations with God and each other, is the sum and substance of salvation. Our success in formal Association has only graduated us in devotion to Christianity—to a spirit that is not subject to any formula of life, place or circumstance, but is universal, omnipotent, aggressive, and unconquered.

We agree entirely with the disapproval that is expressed in this article, of mere socialism, i. e., the tendency shown by Fourierists, Shakers, and others, to seclude themselves in a little salvation of their own, and make a hobby of Association. It is not, and never has been a hobby with us. It is true, that for some years we have been associated in a formal Community; but it has only been as an incidental help to our main purpose—which is spiritual religion, and the extension of Christ's sovereignty in the world. The origin of our Community at Putney was simply a partnership of believers for carrying on the publication of the gospel. At Oneida the

combination has been continued and enlarged, with the same object. We have found great advantage in the arrangement—it has been a valuable school for the development of principles, and has been favored with abundant success, both in a social and material point of view; but with the great object of Christ's sovereignty before us, it is impossible to sink into mere socialists, or become the servile dependents of any outward system of life. Community institutions are one thing, and the Community spirit is another; and while we avail ourselves as far as convenient of the first, we mainly prize the latter. The community spirit is a universal influence pressing down upon the world, confined to no locality, and bound by no forms; it is our privilege to recognize and serve this spirit in all its manifestations. Wherever the faith of Christ is, and the Community spirit, there is our equal interest, whether it is among the forms of barbarism, civilization, or socialism. True communism has no effect to cramp people within the limits of a system, or to tie them down to a local and material self-interest. It goes abroad in a willingness to be made 'all things to all men, that it may save some.' If our ambition is limited merely to our own social well-being, we shall surely fail; for the race is a unit, and no single Association can be wholly successful, as long as others remain in the ruins of selfishness. Final harmony for any body will not come until the discord of sin is silenced in all the millions of the earth.

Accordingly the ruling tendency of the Oneida Community is not towards seclusion, but the reverse. We seek our interest in the broadest identification with mankind. Instead of withdrawing from the great family circle, and pushing out into the wilderness to form a little Zion of our own, as the Mormons and others have done, we are planted in the heart of the Empire State. And following the same principle, the leaders of the Association, at the earliest proper moment advanced and established themselves in this city—the mighty *entrepot* of the new world.

We repeat, that local Association is not a hobby with our people. They can use it, or they can do without it, just as circumstances are favorable or unfavorable. Whoever has the community spirit, has already the true element of combination; and hence our Associations will be of all sizes, where believers are gathered together, from the union of two or three, up to that of hundreds and thousands. We know of instances, where all the essential traits and advantages of Association are secured in single isolated families. This is the spiritual capacity that we wish to encourage and develop—a power of social life that flows from union with God in the first place, and so is made superior to forms and circumstances. With this firmly established, we shall be ready, like the early apostles, to be scattered to the ends of the earth, relying on the power of the divine principle within to conquer its way to a reunion.

## Perfectionism and Socialism.

We have lately received among our exchanges two German papers, devoted to the principles of communism. One is called *Der Kommunist*, and is published at Cleveland, Ohio.—The other is called *Republik der Arbeiter*, and is published in New York city. We have also been presented, through the politeness of the editor of the *Republik* with a pamphlet or manual, entitled "The Gospel of the Poor Sinners, a Rational and Communistical Commentary on the New Testament, with Arguments from two thousand texts."

As we are far from being skilled in the German language, we feel, at present, but little wiser for the paper; but we promise ourselves future pleasure in reading them, having begun to apply ourselves with considerable enthusiasm to the study of German. But the pamphlet is an English translation; and from it (with the little knowledge we can glean from the papers sent us) we are able to form something of an idea of the spirit and principles of German communism. We must, however, content ourselves for the present with few comments, and wait for further acquaintance.

The first reflection that naturally rises in our minds, is that this country, as well as France, Germany, and, in fact, all Europe, is becoming leavened with socialism. Fourierism, Icarianism, Red Republicanism, &c., have emigrated, with the swarming thousands, to the United States, and are fast forming a very important

element in the general compound. Already, we understand, there are at least a dozen German newspapers published in the city of New York, and nearly all of them spiced with socialism. Every thing indicates that a radical reform in the institutions of the world is demanded—that the old vesture 'is ready to vanish away.'

But where is the 'new vesture' that is to displace the old one? There are nearly as many socialisms as religious sects—all crying out against the existing state of things, and each professing to be the grand panacea for all the evils of society. We, too, are seeking a new state of things, and heartily sympathize with any forward movement toward satisfying this universal desire for 'something better.' But we discern a great distinction between true communism, as we conceive of it, and imported socialism, which we will try to delineate.

The communism of Perfectionists is distinguished from all other systems of communism in that it is based on RELIGION. Its first principle is, that the reconciliation of man with God must precede the reconciliation of man with man. A person must 'love God with the whole heart,' before he can 'love his neighbor as himself.' Our only hope for the reform of society is the hope that mankind will be converted to the fear of God, and believe in Christ to the salvation of their souls. We regard sin as the cause of all society and individual evils; and believe that a true system of communism will abolish first of all the institution of sin—one of the oldest institutions in the world. This we see done by the gospel of Christ. He came with power to supplant the root of selfishness, and thus laid the foundation of the only effectual reform of society. Whereas, these modern socialisms are seeking to usher in 'the good time coming' without eradicating selfishness; (which is the cause, as we have said, of all the evil they cry out against;) and they seem to imagine that all that is required to make a Millennium here below, is "social equality and equal individual liberty." We, however, are perfectly satisfied that mankind will never become happy—that the evils of society will never be abolished—in a word, that men will never be truly communized, by any amount of "equality and individual liberty;" and that the grace of God in the heart is the only thing that can effect all this. The 'new wine' of God's Spirit we deem incomparably more important for the happiness of the world, than 'new bottles' of "scientific arrangements."

Another leading distinction between the communism of Perfectionists and ordinary socialism, is in relation to the character and office of Jesus Christ. He is generally classed by socialists (as in the pamphlet before us) with such personages as Socrates, Confucius, Zoroaster, &c. He is considered by them a good and wise man, but no better than many others; and his example and precepts are incidentally brought in to help substantiate their principles. While, on the other hand, we regard Jesus Christ as THE ONE that is to redeem humanity. We consider him the father and founder of all true communism. We have within the last ten years thoroughly and successfully wrought out, both theoretically and practically, a system of communism. But we cheerfully acknowledge that we are indebted to Christ, Paul, and the Primitive church, for all the success we have had thus far, and that we shall be indebted to them for all future success. All the beauties and glories of community life are to be ascribed to them. Our model was manifested to the world on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost filled all hearts, and "all that believed [on the Lord Jesus Christ, who, saith Peter to the Jews, 'hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear'] were together, and had

all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need. And they continued daily with one accord in the temple; and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people."

With this mutual understanding of positions and principles, we shall be glad to cultivate friendly relations with all, and especially with those who are dissatisfied with the present state of things, and are 'looking for a more excellent way'; and we anticipate reciprocal profit from the interchange.

## THE CIRCULAR.

### BROOKLYN, MAY 16, 1852.

#### Notice to Western Friends.

H. W. Burnham and A. W. Carr, of the Oneida Community, having occasion to go west on business, will be at Chicago and vicinity from about the first to the 15th of June. Wishing to make themselves useful to believers in that region, but not to intrude upon them, they take this method of giving notice of their visit, in order that any who desire a call from them may have opportunity to inform them. Letters addressed to Henry W. Burnham, (care of Neha Bailey,) Grand Detour, Ogle Co., Ill., and mailed any time in the present month, will find Burnham and Carr at the end of their business tour, and will determine their subsequent movements.

#### The Philosophy of Puffing.

Nobody can fail to notice the vast amount of advertising that is carried on by business men in the newspapers. That almost every body in the line of trade is mightily interested in making it known, is clear; but what is the real use of so much puffing and trumpet-blowing, is not so clear. The uninformed will be glad to get a glimpse into the mysteries of the subject from the following story of an experienced advertiser:

**CERTIFICATE FOR THE CURE OF BROKEN DOWN MERCHANTS—Read the Document.**—We have often tried in our feeble way, says the *Boston Transcript*, to make the people of this city understand the benefits to be derived by giving publicity to their business, through the medium of the Press. It will cure broken-down, weak, sickly business men—save more lives than were ever saved by all the medicines ever sold—taking the certificates of doctors and druggists for true; but read the document.

**Hear the Testimony.** In the year 1840 I started business in the City of Boston, with a cash capital of \$5,000, and a fair credit. I hired me a good store at a moderate rent, applied myself industriously to my business. In 1842, I took an account of stock, and found that I was \$3,000 worse off than when I began—more than half of my capital had been sunk in expenses and bad debts. This rather discouraged me, but as it was the first year of my business, and I was but little known, I thought I would try it another year. My creditors and friends recommended me that I join a Church or an Engine Company, both of which I did, and in 1843, I again took account of my affairs and found that if I could sell my stock out at the market prices, I should lack just \$1,500 of having money enough to pay my debts. I had a note against one of the brothers in the Church for \$200, which some said was good; this would reduce my indebtedness that amount—but he never paid it.

To make a long story short, I failed—burst up—went to smash—and all my friends and creditors pronounced me a ruined man, and to make it sure, they turned me out of the Church. In 1845, I contrived to get a little money, with which I bought a few goods. I got some bills and cards printed, and sent them to every one I could think of—the consequence was, they began to come in and trade a little. I continued to push the cards and bills, and also to advertise in the newspapers, and customers came in from all parts of the country. I soon had to enlarge my store, and I now do a bigger business than any man in the street. I keep up my advertising, and my business keeps increasing.

I have got \$15,000 invested in good stocks—I own the house I live in, and it is worth \$7,500—my goods are all paid for, as I buy for cash—and I have paid off all my old debts of 1843. This I attribute to your invaluable remedy to an unhealthy business, of letting the public know what you are doing, and what you want to do through the press. If this certificate will be the means of saving one poor man situated as I was seven years ago, my object is accomplished.

C. SHARP, JR.

So it seems that 'C. Sharp, Jr.,' found advertising a better remedy for his debilitated pockets than either joining the church or the engine company.—The *Tribune* thinks there is 'a mine of wealth for business men' in this experience, and all the newspapers pass it round (why shouldn't they?) as proof of the wonderful virtues of advertising. Genin, the great hatter, has also come out with a similar certificate, and in the following paragraph (likewise endorsed by all editors) we have the gospel according to Genin:

"People who are too economical to advertise in the newspapers, will do well to read what Genin, the great New York hatter, has to say on the subject. He talks thus:—'The benefits I have derived from the press, as an advertising medium, it is beyond my power to estimate; and I am well satisfied, from careful observation and experience, that advertising is the main spring of success in every branch of business.'"

This advertising system is a curious trait of the

times; and it remains to be seen whether in the end it will prove conducive to moral health and true enterprise. Under present influences it is being inflated to an extreme degree. The immense sheets of the city press are crowded daily with advertisements, business notices and paid puffs in prose and verse, calling attention to every body and every thing in the course of trade. It is a field which invites inquiry, and we shall keep our eye on it with a view to future criticism. In the mean time we will copy an honest stroke or two at this subject by Carlyle:

"Consider for example that great Hat seven-feet high, which now perambulates London Streets; which my Friend Sauerteig regarded justly as one of our English notabilities; 'the topmost point as yet,' said he, 'would it were your culminating and returning point, to which your English Puffery has been observed to reach!'—the Hatter in the Strand of London, instead of making better felt hats than another, mounts a huge lath-and-plaster Hat, seven feet high, upon wheels; sends a man to drive it through the streets; hoping to be saved thereby.—He has not attempted to make better hats, as he was appointed by the Universe to do, and as with this ingenuity of his he could very probably have done; but his whole industry is turned to persuade us that he has made such! He too knows that the Quack has become God. Laugh not at him O reader; or do not laugh only. He has ceased to be comic; he is fast becoming tragic. To me this all-deafening blast of Puffery, of poor falsehood grown necessitous, of poor Heart-Atheism fallen now into Enchanted Work-houses, sounds too surely like a Doom's-blast. I have to say to myself in old dialect: 'God's blessing is not written on all this; His curse is written on all this!' Unless perhaps the Universe be a chimeric—some old totally deranged eight day clock, dead as brass; which the Maker, if there ever was any Maker, has long ceased to meddle with.—To my Friend Sauerteig this poor seven-feet Hat-manufacturer, as the topstone of English Puffery, was very notable.

Alas, that we natives note him little, that we view him as a thing of course, is the very burden of the misery. We take it for granted, the most rigorous of us, that all men who have made anything are expected and entitled to make the loudest possible proclamation of it, and call on a discerning public to reward them for it. Every man his own trumpeter; that is, to a really alarming extent, the accepted rule. Make loudest possible proclamation of your Hat: true proclamation if that will do; if that will not do, then false proclamation,—to such an extent of falsity as will serve your purpose; as will not seem too false to be credible! I answer, once for all, that the fact is not so. Nature requires no man to make proclamation of his doings and hat-makings; Nature forbids all men to make such. There is not a man or hat-maker born into the world but feels, or has felt, that he is degrading himself if he speak of his excellencies and prowess, and supremacy in his craft: his inmost heart says to him, 'Leave thy friends to speak of these; if possible, thy enemies to speak of these; but at all events, thy friends!' He feels that he is already a poor braggart; fast hastening to be a falsity and speaker of the Untruth."

Finding in the '*Republik Der Arbeiter*,' a German paper, a letter from LEON RYMARKIEWICZ, a Polish gentleman who called at the Oneida Association some weeks since, we were curious to see what his report of our people might be: accordingly half a dozen of us, who were almost entire strangers to a German dictionary and grammar, set to work and elaborated, by consultation and taking turns, the following translation, which, under the circumstances cannot be relied upon as entirely correct, but probably conveys the main ideas of the original.

#### Union Correspondence.

Oneida, Madison Co., April 15, 1852.

You wished to have me correspond with you. Who would not wish to satisfy your desire? Who could not willingly correspond with you and yours? It is but the interchange which glows for human welfare, with a feeling so sweet, so refreshing, so consolatory.

I left the American metropolis in the rain; and like the rain fell my bitter tears on the monument of our immortal champion, Thaddeus Kosciuszko; which the cadets in gratitude erected to his honor, in the year 1828, on a beautiful eminence at West Point.

In the stormy weather, I was carried over the Hudson river in a fish-boat, to Cold Spring; and after I had admired the gorgeous shores, I was chosen by a young lady (I believe she was an angel) for her protector; and after I had visited the Capitol in Albany, where the legislature of the State of New York assemble, I arrived at this place. I was conveyed in a one horse gig, partly on a plank road, and partly by a cross road, to a forest-beshaded, hill-surrounded valley. The colony of Perfectionists at Lenox, was the object of my excursion. In the distance, already I perceived the beautiful buildings, in which an Association of good men have united their quiet fortunes. H. W. Burnham, a member of the family, (as he called them,) received me on the piazza, and took me through a small carpeted ante-room, into the drawing-room, which is finely fitted up in the American style. I found there a lady of the Community, and another lady, who came from the far west, to see, she said with frank simplicity, the arrangements of the Perfectionists, with her own bright sparkling eyes. She said that the Community had been represented to her in a not very favorable light; and for that reason, she took the pains to come east herself: and in the face of their bad reputation at the west,

she, with her rosy lips, pronounced them right—altogether right.

Through the window I saw clean, well-dressed children and maidens at their sports. A man with a gold watch chain, was at work with a spade in the garden. Herr Burnham took me into their meeting room, where they have a pretty well furnished library, and presented me with several numbers of their paper called 'The Circular;' which is published in Brooklyn, by J. H. Noyes, who is a theologian, and the founder of the Society: also with a book in which the views, opinions, and objects of the Perfectionists are explained.

For nine years already, the Society of Perfectionists had existed at Putney, Vermont.—They were then, through persecutions provoked by malicious men, forced to leave the place; and four years ago, founded the flourishing colony here. They possess 250 acres of very fertile, highly cultivated land, for which they still owe the State 800 dollars. They have a fine large house, three stories high, sixty feet long, and 35 feet wide. Below, in the basement, is the kitchen, larder, and dining room. On the ground floor are the reception room, ante-room, and the general parlor where their meetings are held; all finely arranged. The upper stories are divided into sitting and sleeping rooms. Near it is a smaller house, where the children live and have their school. Farther off stand the wash-house, stables, granary, &c., and at a little distance, the large mill and machine-shop. The Community or family consists of 150 members, poor and rich, English and American; women and children included. Yet besides this principal family or circle, other adherents carry on their business independently, in other parts of the country. The basis on which their ideas are built, and the source from which they spring, is the purest Christian religion. They aim to be followers of the apostles, and primitive disciples of Christ. Love governs them; they have almost no written constitution: their law is the Holy Scripture. The rules of their conduct are taught them by the conscience and the heart. From sickness they are almost wholly free; 'and that we ascribe to the love of God for us,' said Mr. Burnham to me, his eyes sparkling with Christian enthusiasm. Only four deaths have occurred among them; and those were children under two years old.

Verily! these people, their opinions, their life, their works—all that concerns them, is extraordinary. They were, by the world, called Perfectionists: they themselves see only brothers and sisters in their neighbors. By means of which, and a system like that of Rousseau's equal education, they are formed children of nature, altogether unexposed to the passions which agitate the world. Their life is as far as possible undisturbed by attachments to earthly treasures. And yet they enjoy freely whatever pleasures fall in their way. Every approved member has brought and given all that he possessed—not always money, but heart, will, and talent, for the benefit of the family. Should he wish to leave, that which he brought will be returned to him. Whatever is given, there are no accounts, no calculations; love, I repeat, is the principle, the alpha and omega, the element of this good people. It is understood with one accord that pleasure is to be divided, and labor to be performed with kindly free-hearted willingness. So far as is needful, all work, even the women and children. Jealousy and envy are frightened away. The whole family is one marriage circle. The hearts are conscious of one love; consequently all things are common among them—women, goods, ideas, and inventive skill. They are not Wesleyans; they believe that Christ has come on the earth the second time, and lives and works in the convert, saving him from sin. They do not follow Fourier, although in external regulations they take much from his system. Your attractive industry, is with them a matter of faith and spiritual life, whereas with Fourier it is a natural attraction to the useful and agreeable. They sympathize with, and one finds among them the so-called spirit-rappers or spirit-knockers; people, who hold a mystical communication with spirits, dead and living. Their officers are not elected, they find them among themselves—ability, education, and God, point them out. Religion, free, out-spoken criticism, and education, are the barriers and guides of their morality. They assemble themselves every evening,

\* This is a mistake. The rapping spirits have never invaded the Oneida Association. Our people believe and rejoice in spiritual communications of the sort that were in vogue in the Primitive church, but they are not customers of the modern wonder-workers, having no more confidence in the wisdom of the dead than of the living, out of Christ. Mr. Rymarkiewicz doubtless gathered from conversation with the people at Oneida that they believe in sensible communication with invisible beings, and thence inferred that they deal in the rapping mysteries. A closer examination of our position would have convinced him that we have stood as a breakwater against the tide of Hadean delusions. [Ed. Cir.]

and busy themselves with a medley of affairs, but particularly with religion; they read, write, and are entirely free in the choice of their occupations, but are generally so moderate that each acts in harmony with the other parts of the family. No constraint, no written laws except those which they have engraven on their hearts, rule among them. One criticises another, openly or privately, but always with brotherly goodwill. They acknowledge the Almighty as the only true owner of all things. God, say they, through the conscience says to men, 'If you in your necessary affairs will pay attention to me, I will take care of your business!' Those members of the family, who originally purchased the land, remain the legal owners, without formally transferring their property to the community: but the productive avails are all common. In case of marriage the man and wife are not separated, but live together. Yet they love not themselves alone, but also those around them, and so their hearts are wide open to receive their neighbor into the circle of their love. One must elevate himself far above the passions of the multitude, in order to have the purity of morals necessary to engage in such a communion. That the Perfectionists are not sensual, is proved by their healthy appearance, their physical energy, and their blooming children. That they are not often carried away with the animal drift, is proved by the fact that in three years only one child was born among them. Their life is spiritual, their communion lies more in the sympathies of society, than in corporeal attachments.

Sundays they have public meetings, for any of those who inhabit the vicinity; sing hymns, and hold religious exercises. On this day also the children are left with their mothers; at other times they are kept at the children's house, which stands only twenty steps from the mansion house. They organize themselves into several groups to execute the different labors; idleness does not abide with them; often they have to check each other from too long work. They have a capital of 50,000 dollars, all property included. Whenever one goes to the town, or elsewhere, where it is desirable to wear better clothing, they take, if necessary, each others' finer garments. There is no mine, all is ours. They have one of the most famous gardeners in the State, Mr. Henry Thacker, to whom I was introduced in their beautiful garden. They carry on agriculture, make brooms, and send them to market—pursue all sorts of business—but pay particular attention to gardening. The expenses for food and drink are 45 cents per week for each individual; and for clothing, about \$10.50 per year. These are the beautiful fruits of associate life. Make common cause with your brethren! in unity is our happiness.

Several gatherings of Perfectionists have been commenced here and there; this in Lenox is in full operation. They have been persecuted, suffering, as all good men suffer, the malicious calumny which envy has poured out upon them; yet they have finally won involuntary friendship. The *N. Y. Tribune* has frankly conceded to them the right, to try the practical carrying out of their system.

I, for my part, heartily wish them the best success; then I might see men pure and happy.

Returning from the garden I observed at the window the beautiful creatures who 'braid and weave, heavenly roses in the earthly life,' regarding me with gracious smiles. I know not whether they have read the story of 'Albert and Amelia,' but their looks beamed with love,—ah love!

Thine, RYMARKIEWICZ LEON.

#### Christian Experience.

The occasional return of some old letter of Mrs. Cragin's, sent us by those to whom she wrote, gives us great pleasure. We find in all the writings she left, her characteristic sincerity, humility, and love. Never any cant or boasting—sometimes 'dark sorrows and melancholies,' 'temptations in the wilderness,' as Carlyle calls them, but these were only the measure of her honesty, and of her justification and happiness at last. We have lately received a letter that she wrote soon after her first confession of Christ, which we thought would be interesting to her friends, and we propose to introduce it with a brief sketch of her previous life, that may add also to the interest of future communications.

Mrs. Cragin was born in Portland, Me., Nov. 13, 1810. Her father was not religious, but she was brought up in the fear of the Lord by her mother, who was a woman of piety, and a member of Dr. Payson's church. Dr. Payson used to visit her mother when she was a babe, and at such times she sat on his knee. At the age of five, her parents removed to New York City, where most of her life was passed. She was well educated, and when quite young became a successful teacher in the infant schools of the city, which were just then in the height of their popularity. At one time she was principal of a school under the patronage of Dr.

Hawks' little cl. ated. twenty Finney true ch render kens of her wit worthy lieved. nant wi her first last, in Lord d of their sanctua sometin tal in b but we publishi tioned, history The I Allen of Cragin's till the and Mr. Mrs. Cr cemente pondent tions in mer acqu doctrines

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Hawks' church, where there were over two hundred little children, and her talents were highly appreciated. She began to seek God when she was about twenty. Her conversion was the first fruit of Mr. Finney's labors in New York city, and she was a true child of the glorious revival of 1831. Her surrender to Christ was sincere, and she received tokens of his love that won her heart, and inspired her with a quenchless desire to know him and be worthy of his love. In marrying Mr. Cragin she believed that he would be the guardian of her covenant with Christ, and an instinct of faithfulness to her first love, governed her life. This led her at last, into the faith of holiness. The glory of the Lord departed from the churches, and she sickened of their religion, and gradually withdrew into the sanctuary of her own heart, where she pondered sometimes on what she heard about the doctrine of salvation from sin. Many influences were instrumental in bringing her finally to a confession of Christ; but we will let her relate her own experience, by publishing in addition to the letter we have mentioned, two other letters relating to this part of her history.

The letter which follows was addressed to Mrs. Allen of Wallingford, who was then a stranger to Mrs. Cragin; and they had no communication after that, till the winter before Mrs. Cragin's death, when Mr. and Mrs. Allen visited Brooklyn, and afterwards Mrs. Cragin spent some weeks in their family, and cemented an everlasting friendship with her correspondent of twelve years gone. The friend she mentions in the first sentence, was Abby Fowler, a former acquaintance from whom she first heard of the doctrine of Perfectionism.

New York, Feb. 29, 1839.

MY DEAR SISTER—I cannot express to you the satisfaction with which I read your kind answer to my letter to dear A—. I heard of her death about three weeks since, and supposed the letter would lie in the office until destroyed. Our kind Father to whose care I committed it, ordained otherwise, and by its means I have become acquainted with another sister, 'whom having not seen, I love' for the truth's sake. You remark that it is four years since you entered the kingdom: I suppose by this time that you have gained that point where you have nothing that belongs to the flesh to trouble you. How is it with you? I long to hear your answer, for I see so much in myself to be removed, that I can hardly see any thing that is done. I feel that I have merely opened the door for Christ to enter in and commence the work of purification. In my ignorance I supposed that when I was saved from sin, the work was all completely done. Far different I find to be the case. I have no condemnation, for I believe and know that I am saved from *unbelief*, the thing which God regards as sin; yet I see so much to be removed, that as I said before, I feel that hardly anything has been done. I wish I did look more to Christ and less to the work to be done. I know I have need of being taught *patience*. I have got to be willing to wait God's time and way for entire sanctification.

One thing you did not mention, which I should be glad to know, whether the sister of A—'s who handed you my letter, was dear Mrs. Chapman. If so, when you see her give her a great deal of love from me—tell her that my mother, with whom she used to be so intimate, is very unfriendly to my views. My brothers have cast me off; indeed, I have not a relative that I know of, that does not feel towards me indignation and contempt. But blessed be God, I want no other friends but himself. In him, I possess all things. Most unexpectedly to me, was my dear husband made a partaker of the rich blessing of salvation.—We thought, and the world thought we were united before; but now we have 'one mind, one heart, one voice.'

I have two little children; one aged four years, who is lame in consequence of having had the hip disease about a year since. I am, while writing this, rocking the cradle of the younger, not yet six weeks old. I have buried two; one a year old, the desire of my eyes, the idol of my soul. My Father had to take her, before I would turn to him; and while I cannot think of her but with a bleeding heart, yet I now feel, *God's will* be done, not *mine*. I have told you our family history; I hardly know why, but I know that I am interested in all the concerns of my brethren and sisters, and take it for granted that they are in mine. We should be very glad to see you. We live now, in the upper part of the city, 60 Jane St.; but how long we shall be here, or where we shall remove, we know not. My husband is out of business, since he left publishing the 'Advocate'; and we know not what the Lord intends to do with us. We are in the hands of him who regards us with a father's love and tenderness. He will provide.

I should be glad to hear from you again.—Much love to all with whom you associate, who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

Yours in gospel bonds, MARY E. CRAGIN.

It will be observed that this second letter is first in time, and expresses her heart when she had just opened the door for Christ, and in the joy of his presence thought not of the work he came to do in his temple.

New-York, Nov. 22, 1839.

DEAR BROTHER:—It is now nearly four weeks since I was translated from the 'kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son.' To him be all the glory, who has taken me out of the 'pit of miry clay,' and set my feet upon the rock Christ Jesus, never to be moved. Long I struggled, hard I worked, and much I prayed, until I saw that *unbelief* was the obstacle that prevented me from receiving full salvation from sin. Here I supposed I must wait for him to reveal himself to me, so that I could believe. Your 'Essay on Faith' was put into my hands, and I clearly saw while reading it, that I had got to confess Christ without *feeling*. This was a new and startling idea, but the Lord showed me that this was *faith*; that this was *really* and *truly* venturing upon him. I immediately began to testify to the fact that Christ is in me a Savior from all sin, and very soon found joy and peace in believing. I need not tell you that my 'peace is as a river.' 'Bless the Lord O my soul.'

But I have not told you all. No: words cannot express the half. While I am writing to you, I am weeping for joy. My dear husband, one week since, entered the kingdom.—When I tell you that he has been the publishing agent of the 'Advocate of Moral Reform,' and had been born but three days, when they cast him out, you will rejoice with me. Ah, Bro. Noyes, how have 'the mighty fallen.' In him you will find a most rigidly upright character—Grahamism and Oberlin perfection all in ruins. How he clung to Oberlin, as with a death-grasp. How confident was he that none were saved from sin, but mere Grahamites—how disgusted with the conduct of Perfectionists! The Lord has pulled down strong towers. Bless the Lord—on the first of December he will be without money and without business. How this rejoices me. We shall stand still and see the 'Lord provide.' Will you please to write to us—direct George Cragin, 60 Jane St. Please to give our love to all in the faith with whom you meet—tell them the enemies will keep us rejoicing all the time, they hate us so. We shall be very glad to see you when you come to the city.

In peace and love, yours,

MARY E. CRAGIN.

Putney, July 25, 1840.

DEAR SISTER B:—Your letter to Mrs. S— was put into my hands to-day, and as my eye ran over its contents, I was forcibly carried back to an epoch in my own experience, when I was undergoing a similar course of trial. I have drank deeply of the cup of self-condemnation, and my heart yearns over all those who are thus oppressed by the devil. You say, 'O that I knew where I might find God; then would I rejoice.' This was the language of my heart for months previous to my deliverance; and I presume you are doing just as I did; that is, overlooking the simplicity of the way of salvation, and expecting some great thing—some special manifestation of God's power made on your account. You say, 'I feel loaded with condemnation.' This I can assure you, is a weight which you will never throw off, until you believe the testimony of the word of God, however your consciousness may contradict it. By reading the 10th chapter of Romans, the first ten verses, you will see that God is a God at hand, and not afar off; that there is no occasion for seeking him from without, for he is already in your heart; and that all he requires of you is to set your seal to what he has done for you, by believing and confessing it.—God in Christ is reconciled to the world, not imputing their trespasses unto them. Shall we continue to accuse ourselves of what God acquits us, and thus judge ourselves unworthy of eternal life? If we do, ours must be the consequences. God has done all that he can do; he looks upon us through his Son, as pure and innocent, and calls upon us to think of ourselves as he thinks of us. Let me relate to you a little of my experience in the matter. I thought pretty well of myself until my mind was exercised on the subject of salvation from sin.—From that time onward, I was an astonishment to myself; for in my own eyes, and I know also in the eyes of others, I was a greater sinner than ever. It seemed as though my apprehension of the power of God to save, only stirred up and brought to light the evils of my nature. I can compare it to nothing but the filthy scum which rises when meat is boiling, which we should never know existed, were it not for the boiling process which reveals it. I tried in various ways, to work out my own salvation in a legal way. Sometimes a duty-doing spirit would fain have compelled me to confess to every body all the wrong things I had ever

done, and accuse me of hypocrisy in case I did not. I learned after a while, the meaning of that text: 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power,' and found that when God wanted me to confess any thing, he gave me a disposition to do it, so that my conscience and inclination were on the same side. I have been reduced again and again, to the greatest extremity of self-accusation; so that despairing of help, I have been compelled to cry out, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me do?' The answer was invariably the same: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' But what (I would ask) shall I believe? Can I, in the face of such evidences to the contrary, confess myself saved from sin? Had there been any other way of salvation, I'm sure I should have found it out; so reluctant was I to come to Christ, until in some way I should make myself more worthy of his acceptance.—Things grew worse and worse with me, until I was shut up to obedience to Paul's exhortation, Rom. 6: 11: 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' This is what remains for you to do—to reckon yourself *now* dead unto sin, and alive unto God; trusting his honor and faithfulness to sustain you, as only he can, in such a confession. If you will boldly and unreservedly thus cast yourself upon God, I know you will find peace. Your troubles of all kinds will flee away like mists before the morning sun, and you will find yourself anchored upon a rock. Try it and see. None ever put their trust in him, and were confounded; neither shall you be. Only make as hearty a confession of a Christ within, as you have of the power of Satan, and you will thus throw your influence on the side of good, and it will rise in majesty and overcome evil. I shall not cease to remember you before God, until I hear of your deliverance, which I trust will be soon. Excuse the freedom with which I have written, and believe me your sympathizing sister,

M. E. C.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

FROM NEW JERSEY.

Newark, May 5, 1852.

—Your calling the attention of your friends to the first and last items of the paper, in the Circular of May 2d, meets with my hearty response. The columns of your paper afford us a rich treat. From it I have received an 'hundred fold,' for what I have contributed. I consider it one of heaven's best gifts. The truths contained in it, if received by faith, will 'open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, will make the lame to leap as an hart,' and in fact will raise the dead to life. Certainly no true heart would consider it any sacrifice to give to such an object, but a blessed privilege. Your paper is attractive, because it is devoted to the sovereignty of *Jesus Christ*. 'His name is great in Israel;' and he will 'overturn and overturn' until he shall take possession, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

H. MACKNET.

FROM NEW YORK.

Perinton, May 4, 1852.

—We have just received the 25th No. of the Circular, and a welcome and profitable visitor it is too. You ask for a response from your readers that you may know whether they are your patrons or partners. We wish to be partners *indeed*, and feel that we are in a measure. Although as an individual I have not had that freedom from spiritual bondage which is necessary for spiritual advancement, yet I feel that freedom is for me through Christ, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not ashamed to confess to the world that all the life that I have ever felt, is through faith in him as a present Savior. You are probably aware that I professed salvation from sin (or a belief therein) in 1843, and enjoyed peace of conscience for two or more years; but was led away from the truth as taught by you, into great darkness, through the influence of various persons. But I would not seek to exonerate myself; I am willing the blame should fall in its proper place. *This* is one thing I know—I have suffered for my *unbelief*. But thanks be to God who gave the victory to Christ; and through him we conquer.

You also ask if we have lost any thing by our venture. We think not; but feel amply rewarded. We were much interested in the last Home-Talk, and hope to improve by it: the hints are good, and very applicable to my case; so much so that I almost think you have been looking in upon us. I feel that I have not got my business where it ought to be, and where you recommend it to be; and therefore cannot say with brother H—, that my troubles are all external,—though that is the victory that should and must be gained.

Yours truly, J. E. HOWARD.

The best probability in any given case is as good, for all practical purposes, as a certainty.—Where there is no certainty you are bound to choose the strongest probability, and cling to it with the same tenacity as though it was a certainty. To illustrate: suppose a person falls into the water, and two apparent methods of escape are presented to him, and there is a greater probability of escape by one method than the other, but no positive certainty in either case. If under such circumstances a man chooses the worst probability, he is as guilty of suicide as if he had chosen death.

It is not so hard work to 'set the Lord always before our face' as people are apt to imagine. If there were no opposing forces it would seem perfectly natural—persons would have a proclivity to do right, as much as water has to run down hill: and, as things are, it is comparatively easy.

## Table-Talk, by J. G. N.—No. 15.

March 5, 1852.

CRITICISM.—I have an increasing sense of the value of criticism. Criticism, if it comes from the right source—from heaven and the pure spirits above us—is not an enemy, but a friend; it is our best friend. When we ask for the Holy Spirit, we really ask for criticism. It is impossible for the Holy Spirit to come upon those that are not wholly civilized, without criticising them—without purging from them whatever is false.

Christ says, 'Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.' And he immediately afterwards tells his disciples *what* to seek after: 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' (Luke 11: 9-13.) In seeking for the Holy Spirit, we must have a right idea of what it is, and receive it in its true character and office. We may form a true conception of that office, from this saying of Christ's: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit.' (John 15: 1, 2.) Let us seek and invite the Holy Spirit, with the understanding that it will purge us, and faithfully criticise us, that we may bear fruit bountifully.

We have invited Christ to our table, and I think we can all truly say, that he has accepted the invitation, as far as it has been extended to him. I now propose that we enlarge our hearts, and invite him to criticise us at the table—give him the superintendence of our bodies and souls, and every thing pertaining to the table, and expect that he will educate us in the truthful, chaste management of ourselves in eating and drinking. And I am confident that he will accept of this invitation, if it is given him heartily, in faith. But his criticism will not benefit us, unless we appreciate the beauty and value of it, as a means of grace. I confess that I have a sense of the value of improvement and final perfection, which so overbalances present suffering in discipline, that I rejoice in all experience that looks toward that object, with a triumphant hope in final victory over all evil. We shall reach the tree of life through criticism.

I recommend to all who have any difficulty with their alimentiveness, to invite the criticism of God—to seek help from fellowship with the Spirit of truth, 'which is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit,' &c. But we need not necessarily anticipate much suffering from the criticism of God. If we yield ourselves to it, we shall find as much pleasure as pain in the operation. We shall at least suffer less from God's treatment of our case, than from our own or others' treatment of it. At the same time that God is perfectly faithful, he knows how to save us from pain. He is the most merciful being in the universe, and the last to condemn us. 'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' 'Cleanse thou me from secret faults.'

[The series of "HOME-TALKS" (continued in this paper from the Oneida Circular.) will be understood to be off-hand conversational lectures, spoken at our evening fireside, and phonographically reported by Wm. A. Hinds.]

### Home-Talk by J. H. N.—No. 96.

[Reported for THE CIRCULAR, APRIL 23, 1852.]

#### TRADE AND WORSHIP.

The devil is, and always has been, a rival of God for the worship of this world. We cannot account for the fact that many nations are abandoned to the worship of stocks, and stones, and hideous monsters, except by assuming that they are inspired—that there are evil principalities at work upon them. Satan is called 'the god of this world'—he is the head of the principalities that are busy in inspiring mankind with false worship.

The characters of the two great rivals for the worship of the world, are distinguished by the manner in which they seek worship. The devil seeks worship, and gives inspiration, in the way of TRADE. He is the great trade-god. He gains his devotees by trade. His standing proposal to all mankind, is, 'If you will make proper sacrifices to me—worship me devotedly—I will give you the good things of this world.' That is the trade that is constantly going on in all heathendom between the devil and his worshippers. All idolatry is a trade in which worship is bargained for physical good. On the contrary, the idea of trade between the worshippers and worshiped is excluded from God's kingdom. He asks people to worship him, because he is good and lovely. Though he blesses his children with all necessary things, it is a free gift on his part. There is no trade in the matter; he does not buy worship, and will not accept of any that is not spontaneous.

This view of things discovers to us the difference between God and the devil, at the outset. Both want worship, and both seek it.—The devil hires persons to worship him, but God will not accept of any worship that is not of the nature of a free gift. All heathendom are bartering their worship for sensual enjoyments. It is an old story, that Satan comes to persons, offering them a large sum of money for their souls. This is virtually made true in idolatry—men sell their souls for prosperity.—This scheme of speculation came out in its open, gross form, in Christ's temptation. 'The devil took him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' Satan had succeeded, up to that time, in making a bargain with nearly all mankind; and he supposed, by suitable liberality of offer, he could make a bargain with Christ. But he failed—he appealed to an element that was not in Christ—covetousness. Christ answered him with words that he never can forget: 'Get thee hence Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.' (Matt. 4.)

We have, however, great reason for rejoicing, in view of the fact, that the gross form of the devil's worship—open idolatry, is nearly abolished from the world. God commenced his work against it in Abraham, and has been engaged in the same work, ever since. He had great difficulty in heading idolatry among the Jews. It was continually leaking in upon them, from the circumstances that surrounded them. He finally sent them into captivity, to cure them of it. While there, a few of them were considerate enough—had enough fear of the God of heaven, to reject the idolatry of Nebuchadnezzar, and refuse to bow to his golden image. In so doing, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego made an atonement for the children of Israel, as truly as did Phinehas the son of Eleazar. (See Num. 25.) That atonement attracted the spirit of God; and diffused a bold, fearless, godlike spirit among all the tribes in captivity. A reaction took place against the spirit of idolatry, that made an end of it among the Jews, even while they were living in the midst of its abominations—in situations calculated to swallow them up, and entirely destroy their allegiance to the

living God. The Jewish nation was plunged into the very sink of idolatry, and rose out of it into clear recognition of the true God.—From that time, they began to read, write, and study the Bible; and civilization commenced its work among them in earnest.

Satan being thus deprived of open idolatry among the Jews, betook himself to cultivating the secret, inferior forms of it, in covetousness and worldliness. Covetousness, we may say, is the *varioid* form of idolatry—a milder type of the disease, which the Jews are distinguished for to this day. But the gross form of devil-worship, the real idolatrous *small-pox*, was effectually broken up in the Babylonish captivity, and Satan has only been able to carry on his magnetism since, at a great disadvantage. The Jews, by their emancipation from idolatry and their education under God, became the womb of Christianity; and so developed a spirit that is the final cure of false worship in every form. Christ and the Primitive church came out against the second form of idolatry, the love of money, with a vehemence that fully matched the devil's subtlety in establishing it. They also carried an influence opposed to the first form of the devil's worship beyond the Jewish nation, among the heathen;—and their power and success against this gross form of idolatry was such, that within three hundred years, the devil's prime ordinance was destroyed throughout the whole Roman Empire.

Thus Satan's worship has been under effectual check since the time of the Jewish captivity at Babylon. An element was generated at that time in the Jewish nation that virtually destroyed it in the whole world—gross idolatry, from that time to the present, has vanished before Christianity and civilization. China has been compelled to open her ports to the enlightened nations of the earth, and barbarism has been swept almost entirely from this new world. His satanic majesty, as superintendent of this world, and demanding its worship, has been forced to see his highest ordinance abolished, or in the way of being abolished, in every part of it.

This view of things discovers to us the purpose of God in regard to these Foreign Missions. He does not intend to really Christianize the heathen nations by them, any more than he did the Jews by sending them into captivity. The first step toward Christianity is to break up the devil's worship. This is the work of the Missions. They destroy the devil's worship wherever they go, and bring the nations up into a line with the Jewish nation when they came out of captivity, and began to build synagogues and read the Bible. We must not forget that the abolishment of the open worship of the devil is a very important matter; it shuts off an immense amount of diabolical influx.

As we have said, the devil buys his worship; and, in the case of Job, he endeavored to saddle the same littleness and meanness on God; saying, 'Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.' As much as to say, 'Thou hast traded with Job—Job does not serve thee for naught. Take away those blessings, and he will curse thee to thy face. God said to him, You shall see whether there is any trade about it. So he gave the devil liberty to do what he would to him, his friends, and his property, only he was to spare his life. The devil exercised his liberty largely; but God came off conqueror—the devil could not make out that there was any trade in the matter. Job answered to all his misfortunes, 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'—(Chap. 1: 21.) Job's wife, however, verily believed it was a trade, and was in favor of a 'strike.'

We may fairly say to the devil, you are beaten on your first line of trade. You must admit that you were beaten in the case of the Jews,

and you are now defeated in the Roman empire, and in nearly all the nations of the world. And the fact that you have been thus beaten on your first line, is a sure pledge that you will be beaten on the second line. The gospel is effectual against the varioid, as well as the small pox.

We have seen that God destroyed idolatry among the Jews, by sending them into captivity to the Babylonish idolaters. What was apparently the worst thing for them, proved the best. On the same principle, I verily believe that the present influx of gold into the world, will make an end of the love of money.

### HOME-TALK—NO. 97.

[Reported June 27, 1851.]

#### FAITH IN THE 'HIGHER LAW.'

It is a good time to read the life of Cromwell. The same contest, in reality, is now going on that was going on in Cromwell's time, and under similar auspices. There was then a heroic attempt to bring the Government of England under the influence of God, to conduct its affairs in the fear of God, and thus establish the kingdom of heaven on earth. And although that attempt was not entirely successful, and there was not civilization and spirituality enough to apprehend the whole truth, yet it was the germ of all the movements that have since been made in the same direction. Out of it came the Puritan emigration; and from that came our Revolution—the mother of all present progress and improvement, in this country at least.

The object that inspired Cromwell and his men, has been growing in the world from that time to the present. Men are compelled involuntarily to acknowledge that the law of God is above all human law. They affirm that the authority they seek to make supreme is the Bible; but that is a mere *ruse*. The only basis on which a higher authority than human legislation can be established in the world, is the one put forth and maintained by Cromwell, viz., that of an *actual, living manifestation of the will of God*. The principle which governed Cromwell in his wars, and upon which the Protectorate was based, was an appeal to palpable evidences of Divine providence manifested in their favor. When he wished to carry a measure in Parliament, or elsewhere, his custom was to recapitulate the evidences of God's providence among them, and then say: 'we, honest and godly men, have had such and such things set home to our hearts?' It was not simply an appeal to the Bible; it was an appeal to the living God.

Here is where we plant ourselves. We believe, with those old Puritans; that we can ascertain the present Divine will; we believe that, by prayer and watching God's providences, we can find out his pleasure with perfect certainty in regard to human affairs, and need not grope round in the dark. This was true of Cromwell and his followers. It is perfectly evident that a Divine power—at least Divine so far as omnipotence was concerned—a power above all other powers—was with those men. He called his army a company of poor, miserable men, more fit for the hospital than actual service. Yet they drove every thing before them, as the Jews did the Philistines; and were never once defeated, though they fought hundreds of battles. The two opposing forces—the king and his army on one side, and Cromwell with his men on the other—were about equally balanced as to power: and a superficial observer would not discover any particular reason why Cromwell's party should be successful. But they uniformly were, and the cause must be traced directly to their connection with a living providence.

It is very interesting to notice how persistent Cromwell and his men were, in acknowledging divine assistance. They were honest enough to see and confess that success depended not upon their own strength, but upon the arm of the Almighty. They were also modest enough, when they did get into trouble, to confess it, and seek to discover the cause. At a certain time during the civil war, when prosper-

ity seemed to forsake them, and (as they confessed) they 'were wanting a spirit of faith, and also the fear of the Lord, and were unduly impressed with the fear of man, which brings a snare,' they held a prayer meeting, which continued for three days; and earnestly besought the Lord to show them the cause of all their troubles. The following clumsy paragraph, describing the scene, is interesting, because it tells us what a sincere, God-fearing spirit those old Puritans possessed:

"Accordingly, we did agree to meet at Windsor Castle about the beginning of sixteen hundred and forty-eight. And there we spent one day together in prayer; enquiring into the causes of that sad dispensation; coming to no further result that day; but that it was still our duty to seek. And on the morrow we met again in the morning; when many spake from the Word and prayed; and then Lieutenant General Cromwell did press very earnestly on all there present, to a thorough consideration of our actions as an army, and of our ways, particularly as private Christians, to see if any iniquity could be found in them, and what it was; that if possible we might find it out, and remove the cause of such sad rebukes as were upon us (by reason of our iniquities as we judged) at that time. And the way more particularly the Lord led us to herein was this: To look back and consider what time it was when with joint satisfaction we could last say to the best of our judgment, The presence of the Lord was amongst us, and rebukes and judgments were not as then upon us. Which time the Lord led us jointly to find out and agree in; and having done so to proceed, as we then judged it our duty, to search into all our public actions afterwards, duly urging (as the Lord helped us) each of them with their grounds, rules, and ends, as near as we could. And so we concluded this second day, with agreeing to meet again on the morrow. Which accordingly we did upon the same occasion, reassuming the consideration of our debate the day before, and renewing our actions again. By which means we were, by a gracious hand of the Lord, led to find out the very steps (as we were all then jointly convinced) by which we had departed from the Lord, and provoked him to depart from us. Which we found to be those cursed, carnal conferences, which, our own conceited wisdom, our fears, and want of faith, had prompted us, the year before, to entertain with the king and his party."—*Carlyle's Cromwell*, p. 254-5.

That scene is very instructive to me. There is something truly sublime in it. Just think of a whole army praying and fasting three days, to 'find out the mind of the Lord.' They went to work too, in the right manner to get out of their difficulties. There is no surer way out of trouble, than for persons to 'look back and consider what time it was when they could say, the presence of the Lord was amongst us,' and then 'search into all their actions afterwards.'

The Puritans carried the fear of God, and inspiration, into the extraordinary affairs of life; but the greater miracle—the work before us, is to carry the same elements into ordinary business—the common, practical matters of every-day life.

Follow your inward instincts. Do things, not from the influence and expectations of those around you, neither from the apparent demands of your situation and circumstances; but from inward inspiration. What you have a real appetite for, that do and say. Be sincere.

When you find blessings begin to wane, instead of fretting about the matter, thank God for what you have enjoyed—use your heart and tongue in gratitude for favors already received. Gratitude is the tax which is due from us to God, for his blessings. He has little encouragement to continue, or renew gifts, whilst we are discontented lest we shall lose them.

EDITORIAL RECIPROCITY.—The Boston Congregationalist, and the Trumpet, (a Universalist paper,) have made an arrangement for each paper to keep before the people, in standing columns, a collection of Scripture texts selected by the other.—So that the Trumpet publishes every week a list of texts against Universalism, selected by the Congregationalist; and the Congregationalist publishes every week a list of texts selected by the Trumpet.—And each is pledged to continue this arrangement as long as the other will.—*N. Y. Evangelist*.

#### Letters Received.

J. L. Stiger; G. C. Mix; S. Field; E. C. Mason; A. Skinner; A. C. Sears; P. A. Hull; D. A. Hale; E. Hitchcock; A. Lusk.